THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) : (a) Yes, Sir. The first meeting of the India-China Expert Group was held in New Delhi, February 2—4, 1994. The second meeting of the Group was held in Baijing, April 21-22, 1994.

(b) At its first meeting, the Expert Group reached basic agreement on many issues relating to its mandate, future tasks and methodology. At its second meeting the Work Regulations of the Group, which spells out its mandate, future tasks and modalities were signed. Both sides adopted a constructive and forward-looking approach in these discussions, which were held in a friendly atmosphere.

Simultaneous Visit of U.S. Deputy Secretary of State to Islamabad and New Delhi

5617. SHRI SYED SIBTEY RAZI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be plesed to state :

(a) whether the Deputy Secretary of State of U.S.A. visited Islamabad on 8th April, 1994;

(b) if so, details of issues discussed during his visit ;

(c) whether Islamabad was offered some proposals by the visiting Deputy Secretary of State during his visit;

(d) if so, details threof with reaction of Islamabad to the same;

(e) whether Government proepose to take measures to publicise her stand on bilateral issues in the World Fora incorporating the development arising from the simultaneous visit of U.S. Deputy Secretary of State to New Delhi and Islamabad ; and

(f) if so, details thereof and if not, reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA) : (a) to (f) U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Mr. Strobe Talbott visited Islamabad from April 8—10, 1994. Government have no details of private, confidential exchanges between the visiting US Deputy Secretary of State and his Pakistani interlocutors. As per the official text of the joint statement by the US and Pakistani sides which was released to the press, Mr. Talbott held talks with Pak President Farooq Leghari, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, Foreign Minister Assef Ahmed Ali, Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Shaikh and other Pakistani officials at the the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Pakistan Prime Minister hosted a lunch in Mr. Talbott's honour and the Foreign Minister hosted a dinner.

The US-Pak talks covered varios aspects of their bilateral relationship as well as the regional and international situation. Pakistan reiterated its concerns about the situation in Kashmir, The US side reaffirmed its proposal that Pakistan agree to a verifiable cap on the production of fissile material in association with enhanced US cooperation with Pakistan in various fileds. Pakistan expressed support for the objectives underlined in the US proposal. The two sides agreed to proceed with futher consideration of the US initiative, with a view to developing an approach acceptable to both the US and Pakistan. Both countries recognised the destabilising consequences of ballistic missile deployments in South Asia and expressed the hope that all parties would forego such development. Both countries supported the early convening of multilateral talks on arms control, non-proliferation and security in South Asia.

Government have conveyed India's deep concern at the US proposal to transfer F-16 aircraft and other military equipment to

Pakistan. It has been emphasised that in the event of such supplies to Pakistan, India would have to take necessary steps to safeguard its national security. Government's policy is that bilateral issues are to be resolved through mutual dialogue between the parties concerned. This policy has been reiterated in all relevant forms.

Amnesty International's Report

5618. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report published in the 'Pioneer' of March 22, 1994 relating to the reported recent indictment of the Pakistan Government by the Amnesty International for serious human rights violation ;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard ; and

(c) what steps Government have taken for raising the question of violation of human rights by Pakistan in the international fora and other countries ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Amnesty International in a 76 page document titled "Pakistan-Torture, deaths in custody and extrajudicial executions" released on 7 December, 1994 has stated that torture by the police, paramilitary and armed forces is endemic, widespread and systematic in Pakistsn, often leading to custodial deaths. This document has also detailed the methods employed for torture. Amnesty International has also made recommendations calling upon the Government of Pakistan to take steps to safeguard against torture, extrajudicial executions and disappearances in Pakistan.

(c) Government are aware of various reports on the conditions of human rights in Pakistan. Government have, at international fora, drawn the attention of the world community to the condition of human rights in Pakistan as reflected in these reports. It is regretable that, instead of taking steps to ameliorate the condition of its own people, Pakistan is indulging in a dis-information campaign against India on the human rights issue.

ISI Support to ULFA

5619. DR. ISHWAR CHANDRA GUPTA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence are supporting the United Liberation Front of Assam by providing a range of facilities and hide-outs ;

(b) whether ISI was providing hide-outs in Bangladesh for ULFA cadres;

(c) whether Bangladesh Government has been approached in the matter; and

(d) if so, with what results ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA) : (a) and (b) Government are aware that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence is supporting Indian insurgent groups including the United Liberation Front of Assam through its bases in Bangladesh.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir; the issue has been taken up with the Government of Bangladesh on several occasions most recently at the first meeting of the Indo-Bangladesh Joint Working Group held in New Delhi from March 29—31, 1994.